

Chicago – Detroit / Pontiac High Speed Rail Corridor Program Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Prepared by:
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration
and
Michigan Department of Transportation
In partnership with
Illinois Department of Transportation
and
Indiana Department of Transportation
In cooperation with the:
Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. National Park Service

Pursuant to:
National Environmental Policy Act (42 USC §4332 et seq.), and implementing regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), 64 FR 28545, 23 CFR §771, 49 USC §303 (formerly Department of Transportation Act of 1996, Section 4(f); National Historic Preservation Act (16 USC §470); Clean Air Act as amended (42 USC §7401 et seq. and 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93); the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC §1531-1544); the Clean Water Act (33 USC §1251-1387); and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (42 USC §4601).

FRA will issue a single document that consists of the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision pursuant to Pub. L. 112-141, 126 Stat. 405, Section 1319(b) unless FRA determines that statutory criteria or practicability considerations preclude issuance of such a combined document.

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This Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluates intercity passenger rail service improvements in the 300-mile Chicago, Illinois to Detroit/Pontiac, Michigan corridor through Cook county in Illinois; Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties in Indiana; and Berrien, Van Buren, Cass, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Jackson, Washtenaw, Wayne and Oakland counties in Michigan. Both a No Build and Build Alternatives for passenger rail improvements are evaluated. The No Build Alternative includes independently planned improvements for passenger rail service between Kalamazoo and Dearborn, Michigan as part of the current Amtrak Wolverine service. The Build Alternatives consist of improvements to tracks currently owned and operated predominantly by Michigan DOT, Amtrak, Canadian National, Norfolk Southern, CSX Transportation, Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, Indiana Harbor Belt, and Conrail. The Build Alternatives would create a competitive transportation alternative between Chicago and Detroit/Pontiac by reducing passenger rail travel times, improving service reliability, increasing frequency of trips, providing an efficient transportation option, improving passenger ride quality and comfort, and providing environmental benefits, including reduction of air pollutant emissions.

Comments on this Draft EIS should be received by December 19, 2014, and should be sent to Mr. Mohammed Alghurabi at the above address. The Draft EIS can be accessed by visiting www.GreatLakesRail.org.